



Policies & Procedures

Well Child Policy:

It is the belief of our practice that all children should be seen for routine well child visits according to the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Prior to two years of age, children are seen on a frequent basis, generally every 2 to 6 months.

The specific required visits are outlined in the Pediatric Care Schedule available on our website. Following the 2-year visit, we recommend that your patient be seen on the annual basis while your child is in our care. During the annual health assessments, we will assess the patient's growth and development as well as determine if he or she requires any vaccinations and/or bloodwork or other tests. Please be informed that the opportunity to ensure the health and welfare of your child is our utmost concern and that we will gladly discuss any associated insurance or financial concerns if there is an issue. **Also, school-based exams or sports exams performed by private facilities such as urgent care centers do not replace the annual exams required at our office.** The documentation and provision of examinations, necessary vaccinations, and laboratory tests at Summerwood Pediatrics are a requirement of our practice's recognition as a Certified Medical Home.

Vaccination Policy:

Summerwood Pediatrics strongly supports the vaccine guidelines of the (AAP) with regards to the use and timely administration of disease preventing and life saving vaccinations. Although most vaccines are mandated and required by the New York State Department of Health, we support the recommendations of the AAP and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) with the regards to the use of all suggested vaccines which is intended to improve the health and welfare of the children in our practice. Prior to the administration of each vaccine, you will be able to view a Vaccine Information Sheet (VIS) and will be given the opportunity to discuss any concerns or questions.

STI Screening:

Per New York State Health Insurance guidelines, we are required to provide certain STI screening for females 16 and over. At well-child visits, all patients are asked to leave a urine sample, but for females starting at their 16-year well-child visit, we are required to start running a "CT/NG" tests, among others. This particular tests detects the presence of Chlamydia trachomatis and Neisseria gonorrhoea. These two illnesses, if left undetected and untreated, may cause complications that include pelvic inflammatory disease and infertility, which is why insurances have targeted the female population. It is our policy to follow the guidelines of our insurance partners and the CDC 2021 "call to action" and test the urine of all female patients 16 and over as a **precaution**, regardless of sexual activity status. In compliance with New York State privacy guidelines, results for these screenings will only be disclosed to the patient.

Medication Management Patients:

(Ex. ADHD, Behavioral/Mental Health, Asthma, etc.)

We have been informed by many insurance companies that the cost of prescription medications, if used for managing a diagnosis that may include ADHD, Behavioral or Mental Health Disorders, Asthma, etc. may not be covered if the patient is not followed and seen by their primary care provider or a specialist at least once **every 3 months, or every 6 months for asthma.** Because we are concerned that an interruption in medication therapy may result, we have instituted a policy that will assist parents with reminding them that an affected patient will be seen on a 3-month schedule (or a 6-month schedule for asthma patients) for a follow up visit if medicated (1-month if medication is newly prescribed or changed) for any diagnosis that may require medication therapy, including those listed above. Please understand that refill requests for medications may not be honored unless the patient is up to date with appointments, and continued noncompliance may result in discharge from the practice.

No Show & Late Cancellation / Reschedule Policy:

Each time a patient misses an appointment without providing proper notification (no-shows) or cancels/reschedules with less than a 24-hour notice, another patient is prevented from receiving care. **If you have 2 or more no-shows in a 12-month period, you may be subject to discharge from the practice.** Due to high patient demand for appointments and limited availability, any missed appointment or an appointment cancelled or rescheduled within 24 hours is subject to a fee that is not covered by insurance and not applicable towards deductible. Repeated late cancellations or late reschedules may result in discharge from the practice. **Appointment reminders from our automated system are a courtesy**, but it is your responsibility to remember and attend scheduled appointments. Not reading or receiving a reminder will not result in waiving no-show fees.

Late Arrival Policy:

Please be aware that appointments must be attended regularly and on time. Late arrivals cause a “domino effect” of delays for the office and impacts all appointments after yours as well as the staff schedule. Arriving late also cuts into the time the provider can spend with you, and we do not want you to feel rushed. Therefore, there is no grace period between your scheduled appointment time and your arrival time. We understand that sometimes weather and traffic can be unpredictable, so we kindly ask that you account for this by planning to arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment time. Additionally, there could be paperwork that needs to be completed and reviewed prior to your appointment. Planning to arrive early will help you have the time you need to complete paperwork and will help us keep our schedule on time and running smoothly. Chronic late arrivals to the practice after being warned could result in discharge from the practice.

Designations:

We understand that situations arise where the parents or legal guardians of patients may not be able to take patients to their appointments. We offer the ability for you to assign a designee to transport your child to and from appointments, however, this designation does not grant the designee the ability to act in a parental or guardian capacity. Designees cannot make medical decisions for the patients, and they cannot schedule appointments. Designation forms are available on our website and in our office.

Custody & Legal Paperwork:

Families come in all shapes, sizes and configurations. That is part of what makes everyone special. In order for us to best respect all parties in your family, we ask that any custody, legal guardianship, or other applicable legal paperwork be submitted to our offices as soon as you have a copy available. This will help us ensure that the wishes of the family and the orders of the court are being adhered to. Without overriding legal paperwork on file, we will handle scheduling and familial information sharing in a way consistent with our office best practices. We also request mutual and professional respect by not involving our office in custody disputes. **We will not write letters on behalf of one parent/legal guardian or the other, and we will not “take sides”.**

Self-Pay Patients:

If a patient does not have active insurance, payment in full for all services is due at the time of service. We will not bill for services after a visit if the patient does not have active insurance, except for any labs, testing, or miscellaneous fees that may occur during the visit. If payment cannot be made prior to the visit, you may be asked to reschedule. We can give you information for an insurance navigator if you need assistance obtaining insurance.

No Recording:

Videography and audio recording is not permitted in our office at any time. If you are recording in the office, you will be asked kindly to stop recording. If recording continues you may be asked to reschedule the appointment. Continued refusal to adhere to the “No Recording” policy could result in discharge from the practice.

“Be Nice” Policy:

Weapons and firearms are not permitted on the premises. If any member of our staff feels physically, mentally, or emotionally threatened for any reason (including custody disputes that may occur in the office) we will discharge the patient from our practice immediately. We are here for the wellbeing of our patients, but we will not be jeopardizing the safety or wellbeing of our patients and staff. Any offensive, aggressive, loud, etc. displays of anger or hostility will not be tolerated. This includes verbally insulting our staff in person, over the phone, or by portal messages. Making rude, demeaning comments, talking over staff in person or on the phone, and being excessively argumentative is not considered healthy behavior to model for our patients and will not be tolerated. In extreme cases, the authorities may be called.